

07 August 2012

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

Reference: PRC Docket #MC2012-26

Dear Commissioners,

I am the franchisee/owner of The UPS Store #1303 located in Palm Beach Gardens, FL. I employ four people from our community at this location. I am writing to ask that you disallow the United States Post Office to implement the “enhanced” services proposed in the above referenced PRC docket, specifically:

1. Acceptance of third-party parcels and other items from UPS, FedEx, DHL and other non-USPS carriers.
2. The new ability to use the street address of the Post Office where the Post Office Box is located, rather than the conventional “PO Box 123, Anytown, MA 01234”.
3. The new ability of Post Office Box customers to use the “#123” designation instead of the conventional “PO Box 123” form of address.
4. E-mail/text message notification to PO Box customers of items received. (“Real Mail Notification”)

These new business practices place the United States Postal Service in direct and unequal competition with thousands of small businesses across the country. In reality these enhancements allow the USPS to offer identical services, plus services currently denied to Commercial Mail Receiving Agents (CMRA’s)(PMB providers). The denied services, serve no other purpose than to give the USPS a competitive advantage. Those unfair regulatory advantages include, but are not limited to:

1. The requirement to handle mail for six months for departed/canceled Private Mail Box (PMB) customers. The USPS can re-rent a mail box ten days after non-payment.
2. The inability for PMB customers to file a change of address form once their contract has ended. PMB customers have to email / mass mail / phone every client/customer/contact, at their own considerable time and expense, in order to effect and address change. Adding to the cost, it usually takes a longer time frame to make the change which requires renting the box for a longer period. The PO Box customer can just file a change of address like every other citizen is afforded and it is free!
3. The forced use of a “PMB” or a “#” designator for PMB customers. The industry at one time did make use of the “street address” for customers renting PMB’s, however; the USPS banned the use of this form of address. The reason/excuse was to try to cut down on mail fraud/illegal activity in the use of mail boxes. It was postulated that the street address looked more “legitimate” than a private mail box and thus more people would succumb to the crimes being perpetrated upon them. Thus, to protect the consumer, the use of the “street address” was banned. Now, for some reason, the

USPS wants to use this form of address to its own advantage. Presumably, the consumer now no longer needs to be protected.

4. There has been no indication that Post Office Box rates will increase. These “enhanced services” will surely increase labor/storage costs. Private Mail Box providers have no choice but to increase rates when costs increase. The USPS seems to be able to operate in a deficit indefinitely.

As a CMRA, our business is regulated and inspected by the USPS. We have no problem with this aspect as long as the rules apply equally to all the players with no special exceptions to those who make the rules.

As noted in PRC Order No. 1366, “the Postal Service has not submitted an appropriate filing that describes the nature and implementing rules for these enhanced services.” The USPS failed to follow its own rules in rolling out these new services, made a unilateral decision and executed it without the necessary filings. What the USPS is doing is fundamentally wrong. A financially viable Post Office is an important part of our business, but not at our expense. I cannot sit by and watch the USPS launch a series of products and services specifically designed to take our customers unfairly. A relationship with the USPS is a careful balance of competition and support, and in this instance they have tipped the scales.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Robert D. Neher
The UPS Store #1303
4521 PGA Blvd.
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418
561.624.6300 fax 561.624.0922
Store1303@theupsstore.com